

Poetry Series

Lozaan Khumbah

- poems -

Publication Date:
2013

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Lozaan Khumbah(26th Dec.1989)

A Memorial

In Batal,
On the pebbled-bank of the Chandra River
Where the lonely Karcha Nala
Brings its icy waters from the other side,
Stood a memorial in marble,
Its letters and carvings lost in white,
Unread and unknown to anyone.

Four loving Spirits joined hands
To bring back the words on the Stone,
With paint and brush and gentle strokes.
'..He was forty-three and full of love,
Embracing the cold grave to save another life'
The oldest among us praised him.
The Stone only records when he came and left.

And there the memorial stands- now words in black.
Will the tourists stop to read, and maybe, sigh?
Will I paint those letters again when they fade?
Only the glacier- topped mountains stand in silence;
The Gaddi often passes with his busy flocks;
The snow covers him in a blanket every winter,
And the angry young River flows on forever.

Lozaan Khumbah

A Prayer

When the music fades, and a battle cry sounds,
Yet my heart is feeble and weak
Grant me the strength to fight and be victorious.
When all I need is a comforting hand
And all I get is a mean shove
Help me to stand firm my ground.

When my hard day's work goes in vain,
All my well-thought plans come to ruin,
Help me to see it in Your perspective.
When I want to raise my hands up
In anger and frustration- ready to give up,
Find me the resolve to go on.

When friends do not understand
And I am left fighting on my own,
Let me not face this world alone.
When my heart is burdened with care
And I cannot take one step more,
Whisper to me Your words of assurance.

Don't let me go, my God.
When my only Hope is in You,
Hold me close in Your arms of Love.
When all I seek is your loving face,
Do not be far away from my reach,
My God, let me always find You near.

Lozaan Khumbah

A Walk Together

'Excuse me...' I said,
'Can I walk with you? '
I asked the lady walking before me.
'Of course..' she said with a smile;
Smiling through the fading lights of dusk,
Along the silent country paths,
And into my lonely heart.

So we walked together-
She was a beautiful creation
And her voice was gentle and sweet.
My heart sang, as if in God's Eden;
As if I owned Earth's Joyous Springs;
As if I were a Warrior victorious
Returning home with his glorious beloved.

I told her my name, its meaning too,
As she wasn't from where I belong.
And I came to know hers-
It was a sweet singing bird's.
And we journeyed on, at a gentle pace,
The graceful stranger by my side;
It was an evening most beautiful.

The steps took us to where we'd part;
I wondered what she would be thinking-
My unknown friend, so good to me;
And if I would ever meet her again.
As she went her way as I, mine,
I looked back to see her fading figure
Melt into the night to appear in my heart.

Lozaan Khumbah

An Evening Thought

I sit here on the first floor of a rented home,
And watch as the evening comes in:
Streets crowded with everything;
Children playing, people returning home,
Vendors waiting-relieved of the heat,
Elderly men and women taking evening walks;
Above the tress colorful kites fly in an orange sky-
The promise of a bountiful monsoon;
And the world races on, as if it has always been this way.

I sit and watch, and I ponder- where are we headed?
I hear of floods, and people dying, repeated year after year;
In a government corrupted I search in vain for principles,
Newspapers no longer rem'ber the word 'honor', or 'integrity';
We talk of equality while there is none,
And of development- I don't know what it is anymore.
A day is passing by, and nothing (much) has changed.
A day is coming to an end, or is it just 'a day'?
A day comes to an end, and I wait for a morning.

I watch the people go by hurriedly on the streets,
Busy and in a rush, dodging, racing against each other;
I see no-one looking at the sky or searching for the moon-
Oh yes, this is not the generation of moonstruck lovers,
For they have grown up looking at a grey, tired moon.
What will they do when they come to their homes?
Watch TV for a couple hours- a middle-class comfort,
Judge the government to make them feel more righteous,
And resume the next day like it can only be this way?

My generation have forgotten what humility is,
They are too pre-occupied with the bold and beautiful.
We talk about globalization but forget about our selves,
We discuss government policies, budget and the scams,
Yet our own principles are shipwrecked and we don't realize it.
Where do I look to-oh, he parked his car right in the street!
For hope, for a goodness that comes because we are humans?
History reminds but the present is no different;
It has been a dark dawn too long before a morning.

Lozaan Khumbah

Autumn Evenings

"Fancy a cup of tea? "

October evenings when the western sky is red
Are rare times when migrating birds fly-by over Delhi.
And we, far away from home,
In a place that hardly treats us like its own
Often gather to share a few hearty laughs.

Time is rushing by, precious are the days!
You are here now but perhaps not, next fall.
So we meet over chai and share stories;
We talk of life and politics and faith-
Making memories, nurturing friendships.

But oh, did I ever tell you this?
When the twice-filled cups run dry
And we slowly make our way back to our rooms,
I recall every word, every smile- little details,
As if I could hold the ocean in my hands?

For autumn is but a season-
Ah, one that reminds of life's finitude.
And sometimes, in the evenings, when I am alone
I yearn to be in the company of little angels.
That- that is the only place to be.

"Chai at Ganga Dhaba,6 pm? "

Lozaan Khumbah

Beyond These Clouds

Beyond these mighty dark clouds
There is a blue sky- wide open,
Stretching for many, many miles
Where lively birds fly with freedom
Singing joyful song from their hearts.

Beyond these storms of thunder
There is a calm that awaits me,
A cleansing of doubts and pain,
Of restoration of hope and health,
A beginning of Life again.

Beyond this rain is my Rainbow
My peaceful rest as promised;
My burdens lifted, I shall smile again,
Settle down and make my home
In this plain among gentle streams.

Lozaan Khumbah

Crossroads

And now, I reach here, at the crossroads;
I'll sit down and ponder for a while,
Look back at the trail I left behind;
Recall memories- faces and places,
Tears of failure, smiles of success,
Dreams with which I started this journey,
And lessons learned along the way.

This is the horizon I faintly saw when I started.
Now I stand here- I feel the breeze,
I hear the birds singing (Oh, happy souls!)
A song rises in my heart, I join them.
Then as one pilgrim I look ahead
To the new horizon I must pursue-
As beautiful, as full of promises and, as distant.

Let me say a prayer with a grateful heart,
Close my eyes before I take the next steps;
If Faith is what You ask for-
Even as small as a mustard seed,
(Oh, that is all I can dare to claim!)
I shall walk to the next horizon, and the next
Until I set foot- tired, old, content
At the gates of my Home.

Lozaan Khumbah

Dances At Night

When the sun is set
And all the lights are dimmed
When the world is finally still,
And little men are fast asleep,
Then, will i rise with the wind.

When voice is but a slow breathing,
And motion is but in a sweet dream
When trees speak with the earth
And serene stars with unopened buds
I will start my slow steps then.

The moon always accepts my smiles
Nor do the sky ever make fun;
Once more will i befriend the breeze
And trot in her drunken pace
And whirl with her wild waves.

When the world will not see me
When they cannot point a finger
and lift me up or bring me down
Only in the silent stillness of night,
Only for its joy sway through the hours.

If heaven cries and sheds tears,
Her teardrops one with my own,
And upon the rhythm of their falling
I will lift my feet and bring them back
To dance, and dance till the Morning Star appears!

Lozaan Khumbah

Fingerprints

Someday,
when my journey draws to a close
and I look back
in the yellow of my evening sky,
I shall see your fingerprints
as I turn the pages of my life.

You came
when the Master was hard at work
fixing broken pieces badly out of shape;
You saw the confused mess
from wearing down the rough edges.
Ah! You knew me well:
imperfect, incomplete,
far from wholeness and beauty.

Yet you believed.
and in your eyes I caught
a glimpse,
A reflection of who I can be.

That was the difference, my dear.
Like a good wind drives
the wandering ship homewards;
Like early monsoon showers in the hills
rouse the dreaming seeds to sprout;
Like Words whispered gently
tell me I really am not alone.

Lozaan Khumbah

Freedom

Light the candles now.
Don't wait for the night- can't you see,
This nation is groping for its bearings?
It is struggling: like a woman in labor
Panting, gasping, screaming herself hoarse
Clutching at thin air- fighting for dear life!
Forget her wretched lover, where are the mid-wives?

The youth of this country are on their feet.
Their hearts are on fire, their minds soar fearlessly
Above the emotional cocktail of crooked nationalism
And narrow by-lanes of one-way fundamentalism;
Their vision pierces the thick walls of concrete mansions
Where the rich live, fattened by the sweat of the poor.
The country is aflame, no longer to be doused!

Our songs are the lament of millions
Who toil away their weary, hope-drained lives;
Our shouts are the questions
You failed to ask and address in Parliament;
Our slogans are the whispers of the oppressed
Whose voices have been silenced for millennia
Now rising to an almighty crescendo demanding an answer!

You see, Truth has a way of unfolding.
And if we smile now, don't mistake us!
Behold! We see it unraveling, ever so surely!
This generation shall certainly claim its birthright
Of the freedom to reason, debate and grow;
Of the farmer to her fields, of the adivasis to their lands;
Of the trees to their forests and the river to her courses!

Lozaan Khumbah

Gaddi

I wish I were a Gaddi-
To spend my days where Heaven is nearest;
To roam the breadth of the Himalayas
In the joyous company of my noisy flock;
Grow old and rest in the bosom of the Eternal Hills.

I wish I were a Gaddi-
Smoking pungent biddis on a starry cold night;
Or cherishing cool lassi on a sunny noon,
While my sheep rest by the gentle brook
And good old Tibetan Husky keeps strict watch-
There is no life better than this! !

I wish I were a Gaddi-
Happy and at peace on my mountains,
Feeding my beloved flocks on fresh green grasses.
And when the first snow of winter falls
Lead them safely back to the village
Where my beautiful Love awaits me,
To I stay, until the next Spring comes!

Lozaan Khumbah

Going Home

She always knew
She was going Home soon.
She had a short time to stay;
It was written for her.
Somehow, she always knew.

She made many friends,
Spent a jolly time with them,
Choosing to laugh more often,
Hiding the pains in a smile
And longings within herself.

She knew of their dreams,
And always wanted to fulfill them.
So she asked Him for Time,
Again and yet again;
But who could question Him?

None to call her own,
Except her darling lines,
She always longed and waited.
Perhaps He could have made her stay
And granted her requests.

But she lived like a flower,
Like a leaf that falls before season.
She knew her place would be taken
And her memories forgotten,
Yet she lived with a happy heart.

Twenty one summers was her lot;
Ten years since that night.
She is where she belongs;
She fulfilled her short purpose,
May she live on in our hearts.

Lozaan Khumbah

Homecoming

Away from the city's busy and hurry;
Far, far away from this noisy town,
Safe amongst the evergreen ancient hills
Where this weary Soul finds its rest,
Somehow like God's Eden- My Dear Village!

Tall trees with orchids in full bloom,
Wildflowers abound, many sweet roses too;
Birds in song, bees humming at work,
Little homes rich in peace and love,
Life goes on slowly there- My Dear Village!

Two summers away from Thy bosom care,
How much have your little boy changed?
Tell me what new things you see in me!
What will they whisper behind me?
In soft voices, my own people, My Dear Village!

They wait for me with wide open arms;
To narrate how time has flown by fast-
The fields are fine, the peach is ripe,
Sister's given birth to a baby girl!
How many smiles decorate thee- My Dear Village!

Cared and sustained by God's own Hands,
Accepting life as it comes and at peace with it;
Will they see how I've been fighting hard?
But oh! Rest assured when I step on its Soil!
Peace, when I am home again to my Dear village!

Lozaan Khumbah

I Miss You

I miss you
not only your lively smile,
but also the sunshine
it brings into my heart.

I miss you
not only your bubbling laugh
but also the undefeatable joy
you meet the present with.

I miss you
not only your presence,
but also the comfort of
knowing you are there.

I miss you
not only our star-lit walks
but also the stories we shared
and the questions we asked.

I miss you
not only the glitter in your eyes,
but also the reflection
of what I am, and more than.

I miss you dear,
not only the world you showed me
but also my islands of doubt
you dared me to explore.

I miss you
with the certainty of a journey's end;
loaded with a fortune of memories
which now, is even more precious.

I shall miss you
when the sun rises, and when it sets,
when at dusk I sit down to pray
and my heart wells up in thanks.

Lozaan Khumbah

In This Beautiful World

In this beautiful world I have no desire to die.
I wish to live in the midst of men.
In this sunlight, in the flowering forests,
I the heart of all living beings
May I find a place.

Incessant is the play of Life across the Earth
With its perennial waves of Union and Separation,
Laughter and Tears.
Weaving songs from the Sorrow and Happiness of man
I wish I might built an immortal realm.

Or, failing this, I hope I can claim a seat
Amongst you for as long as I live;
Composing songs like flowers that blossom ever afresh
For you to gather in the morning and at noon.
Accept them with a smile,
And then alas!
Cast them aside again as they fade and die.

Rabindranath Tagore

Lozaan Khumbah

Lay Your Sleeping Head

Lay your sleeping head on me
Rest your weary eyes and close them.
Hear no more of the world's voices
Peace and calm and sweet dreams are yours.

There's a moon outside, as beautiful,
As calm, like when the breeze lifts your hair
Then gently falls back to lie quiet again.
And true, there is not a cloud to hide its beauty.

The glorious midnight dance of the stars,
All come from the corners of the Milky Way;
They shine only to watch over your slumber;
Yes, I've pleaded with them to tarry until morn.

Restless Wind is busy yet again tonight,
Wandering, with a soft hum on her lips,
Like lullabies sung for some innocent soul.
The unending song will keep you warm.

Here, with every passing heartbeat
Our precious stay together dwindles;
Love, this is our time; tomorrow's uncertain
Lay your sleeping head on me.

Lozaan Khumbah

My Ithaca

Today I begin the voyage.
The sails are unfurled,
The anchor is let loose,
The wind drives me on,
I am headed for Ithaca.

To pray is to risk being not answered;
To love is to risk being hated,
To believe is to risk being proved false,
Yet to risk is the only way to attain;
So I am headed for Ithaca.

The sea is vast and deep
And storms I may face.
But there are ports on the way
And a star to lead me on;
I am headed for Ithaca.

Was Ithaca made for me?
I know not; all I know is
I am on my way to know it.
But I will not be found wanting,
So I am headed for Ithaca.

Ithaca is nowhere near sight.
And I seem all alone out at sea.
Yet other ships I may meet
All on their way to their Ithaca;
I am also headed for my Ithaca.

Lozaan Khumbah

Not Right Now, Lord

Oh I know this-
When I started this journey
From the gates of your city
You marked a day for my return also,
When I will come into your presence again.

And you have been counting;
Following my footsteps and traces
Watching where I landed my feet,
Judging my heart on your scales
While I wandered around like a little child.

What is man to you?
You created him a little lower than the angels
And crowned him with glory and honor.
Yet you turn him back to dust
And sweep away all his pride and great riches.

Are we not like the wild blossom
That sways when the gentlest breeze blows,
And wilts when the sun sends its heat?
Our numbered days quickly fly away;
We finish our years with nothing but a moan.

The length of our days is seventy years-
Or eighty, if we have the strength.
Yet their span is but trouble and sorrow;
For a thousand years in your sight
Are like a day that has just passed by.

Oh, Shiv Batalvi was right what he wished!
The right time to fade away is in youth
When we are yet strong, healthy and agile,
To give our fragrance away far and wide
And be buried. Ah! Still beautiful, still so lovely!

Why to grow old and lose your sight,
Or spend your strength in chasing the wind?
Why build castles you will not live in,

Or love people who will leave us alone?
For we always walk the Final Path alone.

We weather the storm and get through;
And find yet another bigger one to face.
For when the circle of life has begun
We have only to work our way to the end,
Where a single cold stone will remember us.

What is man to you? And our life?
Few days of sunshine to light our face
And many days of confusing alarms;
What could be the purpose of this being?
We know not. Your thoughts are beyond us.

And I am but a lump of clay in your hand
You did form me inside my mother's womb.
And all the days ordained for me
Were written down in your book
Before one of them ever came to be.

Teach me to number my days aright
That I may gain a heart of wisdom.
And spend my days to fulfill the purpose
You had in mind when you crafted me,
Which I know not now, yet long to complete.

Twenty one years since that day;
And I have just learned you are above all,
Just begun to see the wonders of your creations.
I have only just discovered a part of me in you
When I breathe this unseen air so effortlessly.

To my Mother who bore me, whom I love,
I am yet only a hope coming to life,
A little child just begin to grow.
I have not dried her tears
Or comforted her in times of pain.

I have not met my love yet, who, I believe
Was also formed to share this life you gave.
I have not looked deep into her dark eyes

And found a joy that is uniquely hers,
Or known the comfort of being truly loved.

Lord, I have just opened my eyes
And I have only begun to walk the toddler's steps;
Yet to give my dear ones joy
And shelter the ones I care for.
You did not mark this season for my return, Lord?

If you call now I would gladly go.
I only have to come back to you
And what better time than this!
Yet what account do I give to you;
What reward would I be worthy of?

I am in love with this pilgrimage;
With these people who walk beside me.
I see milestones, many milestones up ahead
And I look forward to crossing them.
If you would, Lord, I have a long way to go.

Who am I to question your decrees?
I am but a small part of this Universe of yours.
If you send the angels to take me home
I would return but in deep debt-
I have received much and not given yet.

Let me complete this circle that is begun
Finish this race that has started;
Fulfill the purpose you made me for,
Flower this hope of my beloved Mother;
Yes, and love the One who is waiting.

Cover me yet under the shadow of your wings.
Guide me along, like in the past years;
Yet strengthen me to cross this horizon and the next;
For I know I am coming to you, one day-
But in good time, Lord. Not so soon, not right now!

Lozaan Khumbah

On A Day Like This

On a day such as this,
When the rain falls pitter-patter,
Lightning dances and thunders grumble
And a lone cricket sings a solitary tune:
I remember an old, warm kitchen-
Thatched roof, bamboo walls, wooden window
Graced by the presence of great grandma,
A smoky log-fire, a kitten asleep nearby-
And us kids huddled together round her
Listening, with unreserved attention, stories of old.

Grandma to many a fortunate kid,
She was always that old to me;
Wrinkles everywhere, yet what a comfort!
And her stories of magicians and witches,
Of poor orphaned kids and cruel step-mothers,
Of great hunters, warriors and spirits-
When I was a kid, I was all of them.
Oh, how I longed for her to tell me my story!
Stories to lull me to peaceful sleep,
Or on her lap to pass a rainy day.

And on a day such as this,
Sitting on a study-table, writing on a laptop
A fan on the ceiling, CFL light on my right,
I look through this glass window-
The rain falls pitter-patter.
I can almost hear her rugged voice, laughter...
I linger on the memory but the story breaks,
And I miss her terribly!
I try to smile but I want to cry.
I watch the rain fall, I listen to their rhythm
And I long... Oh! I want to go home!

Lozaan Khumbah

On Teachers' Day

Sir,
When I watch you there
Sitting in front of us,
Operating your precious laptop,
Trying to make us understand
Something which is so hard to explain
And even harder to comprehend,
I understand fully the reason why
So few hairs manage to grow
And why even those few are all turning gray.
I only pray mine will not turn gray
Though yours look pretty on you.

Sir,
When you were of my age
Were you as mischievous?
Did you flirt with the girls,
Or fall in love with someone pretty?
It seems so obvious to me.
Did you ever hate the term papers
The practicals, and assignments,
And cursed the one who started it all?
Did you too sit up for late night chats
To wake up late for classes
And come rushing without breakfast?

Madam,
When you enter our class with elegance,
Brushing away the hair with a gentle hand,
Giving us all a loving smile;
It never really seems to me
What you teach will be such a headache
Or the questions you ask
Will be like a thunderbolt.
It really fascinates me to think
That behind that motherly calm you possess
There is a tsunami of fearful questions
Ready to sweep me away to nowhere.

Madam,
When you were like my pretty classmates
Did the boys run after you too?
Did you ever fell in love with one of them?
If not how did you keep them at bay?
(But please Ma'am, don't tell my friends how!)
Did someone ever break your heart?
I would really like to know.
Did someone longing for your love
Ever prepare an assignment for you?
Ah, Ma'am, these thoughts are much more interesting.

Madam / Sir
Perhaps you were naughtier than me
Or perhaps the best in class.
I may never come to know.
But I am happy you are my teacher
That I am being taught by you.
Though I hate(as well as fear) the papers
I am glad you are there to help me out.
My future, which is most important to me
Is in the safest hands possible.
Yes, and my present is fun and full,
I couldn't have asked for more.

The expectations that I long to fulfill,
The competitions I must face and overcome,
The battles I have to win, and for more,
I have you to guide me along;
To show me the paths I cannot see as yet.
And oh, what calm assurance!
I still my heart with all its fears
And bow my head in thanksgiving
To the one who made you, my dear Teacher.
Without you, this circle of life
Would never have been completed.

May Heaven enrich your name,
And grant you health and happiness;
May your days be many more
And your successes multiplied,
Finding a new reason to cheer every new day.

You have carved a place in our hearts,
And there you shall always remain;
Our gratitude increasing with each day.
My dear Teachers, we have only a wish,
Simple, yet sincere- HAPPY TEACHERS' DAY! !

Lozaan Khumbah

On The Bank Of The Beas River

The wind blowing unceasingly,
The Beas River roaring,
Rain drizzling down gently
People laughing and playing-
Life is found here.

When the heart has Faith,
A Hope to look forward to,
And Love to let it live,
This life with all its pains
And joys, is always a cherished blessing

When the dark clouds have gathered
On the peaks of the Pir Panjal,
And the young mountains feel its cold-
Tonight the snow shall fall,
Yet tomorrow, glisten in the morning sun.

Lozaan Khumbah

Precious

It's a little dream
I dare not reveal
Lest the wind carry away
The whispers of my heart.

It's a little prayer
I dare not say
Lest He answers
And drown me in tears.

It's like a brook,
Far up in the mountains
Serene, pure and quietly joyful,
A faithful Mirror, but of what I can be.

Should I linger by this stream,
Say my prayers, awaken this dream?
What joy awaits me! Or what sorrow?
Ah, let me know when it's time!

Lozaan Khumbah

Race With The Angels

Spring's gone, a long time away;
The sun is tired, the leaves are dry,
The birds sing sadness and cold wind blows,
The flowers are for a wreath- nothing lasts forever!

And you're gone, hurriedly, as if late;
Left us here to mourn and cry and weep
And face another day without you.
You'll never know how much we missed you!

Just like all of us, you were His creation,
Come to earth to act, play and perform
And when He calls, to return again;
We only welcome and say farewell.

We pine for what is not and sigh;
Sometimes He seems so inconsiderate
When we bid early goodbyes- too many,
To loving souls, so dear, so close to us.

I know you'll be happier there,
Though we always feel your absence here
I hope to come and see you again;
Don't you cry in heaven- race with the angels!

Lozaan Khumbah

Sing Me A Song, My Love

Sing me a song, my Love,
In your sweet voice a soothing tune;
Like the rain that comes on a parched land,
That satisfies the yearnings of the tiller
And causes the earth to bring forth life,
Sing me a song!

Sing to me of the seasons of life
Of the cycles of laughter and pain
And the secret beauty that lies in them.
Sing for me, to accompany my daily toils,
In my struggles to being a better human;
Sing, that home and heaven might seem nearer.

Sing me the songs of our forefathers-
The melodies that sang of our generation,
Giving comfort to their weary spirits.
Remind me of those songs of old
Let their notes flow out of me,
Let their dreams come true.

Sing me a song, my Love,
A song to teach our children,
A harmony they will carry in their hearts;
A hope to hold on to,
And a dream to live out each day-
Sing me a song!

Lozaan Khumbah

Someday

'Someday', the little voice whispered
'Some fine day, it shall all be.....'

You see, we are all reaching out -
An ocean of humanity
Of lonely cracked hearts, tossed about
And painfully outstretched hands, half-filled.

You see, I am a child of this generation
Impatient, unwilling to wait -
Restless, like the hero of our movies;
And yet, we long- oh, how we yearn!
To center our being, order our universe;
To hold a hand, share a heartbeat;
To be known and loved.

Ah, speak to the winds-
To the sails of my wandering heart!
Command me to walk on the waters,
Till Someday, when I shall see clearly -
Unlike in a mirror, as now;
I shall know fully
As I am fully known,
And rest.

Lozaan Khumbah

Souvenir

Keep this as a Souvenir-
I walked this ground under the sun,
I laughed with joy, cried in pain
In such a season as this.

Keep this as a Souvenir-
What is done shall be forgotten.
Times change, memories shall fade
And what is, shall not be anymore.

Keep this as a Souvenir-
And when I am long gone
With no traces left for you to search
Recall that face you loved.

Keep this as a Souvenir-
And when you are old and gray,
Remember the days of our youth,
Let your heart grow younger.

Keep this as a Souvenir-
When my stay on earth has ended,
And all that I am is no more,
Tell the Stars my story!

Lozaan Khumbah

Sunrise (In Cheirao Ching)

The little village of Tarung slept;
So were the birds of choir
Who lived to welcome every new day;
I arose for I had to see the Sun.

I climbed the silent Cheirao Hill,
To reach the place and watch the scene-
Beneath lay the beautiful city of Imphal
Waking up to the call of dawn.

I waited while the wind teased me.
And lo! The Sun came up in Majesty!
Spreading its golden hue all around
And bringing hopes for a new start.

When the cold breeze brushed my face
It brought me memories of you-
We had watched this beauty together
And sung in unison with the choir.

Your thoughts created in me a smile-
Our friendship, like the sunrise in Cheirao Ching!
And I missed you, also your laughter,
And I wished that you were there.

The Sun beams became strong, I had to go.
I said a prayer to Heaven above-
To keep you safe till the day
We watch the Sun rise, together again!

Lozaan Khumbah

The Castle Of Dreams

This ancient castle is indeed large.
The builders' names are lost in history tho'
These pillared chambers hold dreams-
Abandoned dreams, now fast asleep;
Waiting to be woken up and given life.

This door leads to the oldest spaces,
Where lies the dreams of kings and conquerors.
They, covered with the dust of centuries
Shall not rise again, like their dreamers;
Close this door gently and come along.

See that little girl come slowly in
With rosy cheeks all faded?
The world has a way to deflower dreams,
And she has come to say goodbye to hers.
Aye, we keep them safe here- all of them.

Watch this sleeping Prince of Dreams-
How beautiful and so full of hope!
Yet how lifeless it lies here!
Like a princess' son, stillborn.
Pity the man who only dreamed!

We keep the doors open, always;
And help men bring back to life their dreams.
But O, so few choose to come back here.
Are you come to claim your dreams
Or to see them lie here, and weep?

Ah! Here are your dreams, fast asleep.
This one, when you were very young;
This-of the man you wanted to be.
But- this came of late- you remember?
Aye, you are free to wake them up.

Millions of dreams die and rest here.
We treasure them for man to understand-
Blessed is he who flowers his dreams!

Farewell Young Man, your dreams are alive
Live them and return not here!

Lozaan Khumbah

The Good Old Days

I remember, when we were younger
And more innocent than now;
When life was simple and easier
And worry was not our lot-
The Sky was a little more blue!

I remember the school- our school
Where we grew up together,
Along with all the mischiefs
And the many joys of childhood-
The days of early Springtime.

I remember the games we played
Running round and round in circles;
The laughter that was truly ours;
The secret stories and crushes
The fear and shyness defining Love.

I remember the one I held dear,
The lively smile that I always loved;
The prayers that I used to make,
And the little dreams that I had;
And Time which took her away.

I remember the anger of our teachers.
And how we enjoyed their pain!
How we wore Grays on a Whites' day
And spun our notes and pens
And made the benches and desks to talk!

I remember the fights and quarrels;
We fought like the end of the world
And blazed like hell- fire,
And swore never to talk with again-
How ridiculous they now seem!

I remember the faces in exam hall,
Seeking help from the impossibles;
The blaming of the question papers

And cursing of the strict invigilator.
Yet how they have directed our steps!

Aye, beautiful summers they were,
When we grew up together!
In the comfort of our old hilly school,
Our world was small- just enough,
And Joy and Heaven was nearer then.

I wonder why we grew up so fast,
Why we left our old school behind.
Now we try hard to build a life and career,
Yet, like a bird building a nest alone,
We tire our small, little wings very soon.

Then I long to go back to that place again;
That time which is past, but not lost-
The good old days of our childhood.
Those days which were beautiful-
And will never be again.

Lozaan Khumbah

The Night Mother Cried

'Wake up... We need to pray'
Father's words betrayed his gentle voice:
'Your mother is sick'.

There she was, writhing;
like a snake stamped in the stomach.
I watched: it can't be true! But she
groaned and twisted and clasped my hand;
and my helplessness turned to anger
as her body quaked in pain.

Alas! The doctor is sixteen kilo-meters away,
and there's neither nurse nor medicine here.
Even the quack is no more!
And there is no jeep to ferry her
on a treacherous road in this rain.
Alas! I can't even make a call.
Network is a mountain-trek away
and it's one-thirty in the night!

'Should I awaken the villagers?
They'd make a bamboo-stretcher
to carry her on their shoulders.
They'd nurse her through the forest, you know
even in the death of a stormy night? '
'But we can't; unless she's really, really dying.'

So we prayed, father and son.
Like two useless stone pillars
we closed our eyes while she bared her tears.
Cut-off from the world, left alone -
this wretched zombie government!
In the dark and the rain,
amidst the mocking frogs
and the relentless night-bugs
I prayed for morning light.

Lozaan Khumbah

The Wait

I look out at the evening sky,
As the birds are coming home
And wonder.
My mind wanders away far,
Searching for a comfort.
And when it doesn't find one
It comes back, alone;
Then there comes tears in my eyes.

I look at the stars,
They are silent as my heart.
As quiet as the night-
Not even the sound of a breathe.
I shall not sleep tonight-
Perhaps you will come.

The night songs have long ended
And the winds have died down.
In the east, the sun is rising again,
Here, my heart is dying;
Yet, you are still not here.

Lozaan Khumbah

Thinking Of You

I am watching the sun set;
The last rays of October.
While the wind brings cold
And the leaves fall,
Your thoughts come to me silently.

Why do the leaves fall?
Is it the wind's fault?
Or the leaves' that did not hold on,
Or the branches which let them go?
But do they have to fall at all?

Perhaps, the Sun is to blame.
Why did He have to bring Winter?
But they keep falling;
Soon the tree won't have any left.
Why does it seem like our story?

I am thinking of you again;
Running back to the past,
While the leaves of memory fall;
And without new buds
It will not last the Winter.

I am still sitting here
Though the sun has long set,
I will think of you some more;
Perhaps I can write a line or two-
Tho' that is all I can ever do.

Lozaan Khumbah

To Die Young

If the doors of heaven open now
To take me home where I belong,
When I have but seen eighteen summers
I'll gladly go though still early.
I can't think of a better time than this!

When the face is young and mind fresh
When you're loved more, hated less;
Friends exceed foes- life is in spring,
A summer missed has more worth,
Unfulfilled hopes are even dearer!

Even foes may bless a little,
Wished a longer life for the poor soul;
If death could reconcile, how glorious!
And my loved ones, beating their breasts, bless
A thousand times and rest me in peace!

Then when I am old and full of years
And generated hate and love alike
Then die, and equally cursed and blessed;
Remember my deeds all-good and bad
And half think I should have died earlier!

But my race would be incomplete;
This small world wouldn't have known me.
I'd like to finish the work He entrusted me
There are more hearts to comfort,
Songs to sing and people to love.

Yes, if Heaven grants more years
I shall strive to flower these dreams,
Right the little wrongs to bring smiles.
Even try harder, so when I finally sleep
I am loved and missed more than hated!

Lozaan Khumbah

Untitled

The sun coming up in the east
And the small streaks of clouds
Scattered like little islands
Have made the sunrise beautiful;
Makes my heart to leap wild.

I also hear the tall eucalyptus trees
Shedding their leaves in unison.
The wind, and the fall of leaves
Together makes a music soft
Strong enough to stir my soul.

The seconds are ticking away fast;
These lines are coming to an end.
Slowly, so is my beautiful life.
I may rise like the sun among the clouds
But I will fall like the tall eucalyptus leaves.

So I am carving these lines
That they may play themselves
Over and over again on my day,
Like the wind sings a slow tune
Laying to sweet rest the falling leaves.

Lozaan Khumbah

Waiting

I am waiting, today also.
I will still wait,
With this whole lifetime...
Remembering you,
Always thinking of you,
Unable to forget you...
Well, this life is your story,
This life is only your thoughts.

When you are by my side,
I do not envy anyone-
Not anyone in this whole wide world!
When your thoughts come to me,
Yes, when they come to me,
Never do I think,
No, not even for a moment,
That this Birth consists of pain.

I long to hide you away,
Keeping you only for me.
You are the apple of my eye,
The beat of my heart.
This Birth, this life,
Yes, this Birth, this whole lifetime,
It is only your story...
It is all your thoughts.

Lozaan Khumbah

When I Wake Up Tomorrow

When I wake up in the morning
The rain will have fallen.
The ground would be wet
And the air fresh.
There would be singing in the Church,
Bells ringing from the Temple
Ardent prayers from the Mosque,
All joyfully welcoming the new day.

When I rise in the early hours
The wind would have passed.
Song birds would be in choir
Among peaceful boughs of greener trees;
The nightmares of war and hate
Of oppression, corruption and disasters
Would have ended with my dreams;
And a gentle breeze open my sleepy eyes.

Oh, when I wake up tomorrow
Sins will have been forgiven;
My painful wounds healed,
And relationships restored.
I shall walk with my neighbor again,
Yes, laugh at our stupid mistakes,
And teach our children friendship.
When I wake up tomorrow.
When I wake up tomorrow...

Lozaan Khumbah